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Narcissism and Dispersion in Heidegger's 1953 Trakl Interpretation

NICK LAND

Martin Heidegger's thinking continues to have a massive – and constantly growing – influence on the development of modern 'philosophy'; in the formulation of its questions, the selection of its 'objects', and the constructions of its history. Yet this in itself might not be enough to explain why his 1953 essay on the Austrian poet Georg Trakl should be of interest to us. Does Heidegger's essay perhaps represent Trakl to us in a way that is enlightening or informative? Does it tell us something about poetry, or history, or language in general? Does it, in fact, succeed in doing anything at all? In his safely vacuous text on Trakl's poetry Herbert Lindenberger writes:

> It would seem gratuitous to complain of the wrongheadedness of Heidegger's approach to Trakl, for Heidegger does not even pretend to use the poets he writes about for any purpose except the exposition of his own philosophy. But Heidegger's study of Trakl seems to me considerably less successful than his study of Hölderlin . . . (*GT*, p. 141)

Lindenberger does not ask what meaning can be given to 'success' within a history – like Heidegger's history of being – for which the proper sense of progress has always been the expansion of devastation; a history, that is, which has been perpetually deflected from thinking by a pervasive theo-technical tradition. Platonic-Christian culture has made it not only possible, but also imperative, to think of poetry as the product of a poet, and, derivatively, as something to be 'used' by a philosopher for the purpose of illustrating representational concepts. It is this tradition which directs us to ask

about the usefulness and representational adequacy of Heidegger's essay. Such questions are symptoms of a profound and *positively* constituted illiteracy, whose hegemony it has been the intellectual task of the (post-)modern age to question.

As for Trakl – who failed to organize his desires according to the laws of his civilization, failed to keep a job, became addicted to opium, enmeshed in alcoholism, failed to defeat his psychosis and died of a cocaine overdose in a military pharmacy – what would we be doing to him if we said he had 'succeeded' as a poet? Appropriating his delicate, futile ardour to a society that has forgotten how to despise itself? Trakl's traces are the ruins of a miserable, even horrific, failure. A failure to adapt or conform, to repress or sublimate adequately, to produce, resolve, comfort, or conclude. This failure is not merely a default, however, but a violently traumatic condition. The evolution of his style, if it is still possible to write coherently of such a thing, is a drive towards the dissolution of every criterion for evalu-ation. It is this above all which he learns from his decisive encounters with Rimbaud and Hölderlin. The traditional aesthetics which would distinguish a traumatic content from a perfectly 'achieved' formal presentation loses all pertinence as Trakl presses language into the shadows. The last thing we should want is for Heidegger to 'master' these traumatized signs. To learn from Trakl is to write in ashes.

A long essay by Heidegger appeared in the sixty-first (1953) issue of the German literary periodical *Merkur* which discussed the work of Georg Trakl. This mysterious text, at once intensely personal and strangely detached, was entitled *Georg Trakl. Eine Erörterung seines Gedichtes* ('Georg Trakl. A situating of his poetry'). The same essay, renamed *Die Sprache im Gedicht* ('Language in the Poem'), and now subtitled *Eine Erörterung von Georg Trakls Gedicht* ('A situating of Georg Trakl's poetry'), was later published (in 1959) as the second division of Heidegger's book *Unterwegs zur Sprache* (*On the Way to Language*). The essay which precedes it in the book, *Die Sprache* ('Language'), is also concerned with Trakl, or, more precisely, with the reading of a single Trakl poem, *Ein Winterabend* ('A Winter Evening'). *Die Sprache im Gedicht*, in comparison, cites, or sites, no fewer than forty-three of Trakl's poems in the course of a wide-ranging search for the well-spring of their peculiar language. Outside of these two texts Heidegger makes only glancing references to Trakl's work and to the impact it had on his own thinking.

The 1953 essay consists of three numbered sections of uneven length, prefaced by a short untitled introduction or prologue. These basic partitions are not interrelated according to any conventional pedagogical principle, and do not unfold the stages of a developing argument. It is, for instance, very difficult to discriminate between the essay's three main sections in terms of theses or themes, since each successive section recollects the discussion of the last and subtly displaces it. To depict this complex progression it is perhaps necessary to borrow the 'metaphor' Heidegger himself calls upon, that of a *wave*, which describes motion coiling into an enigmatic pulsion and cyclical repetition. Yet the peaks and troughs that alternate within Heidegger's text do not follow the regular trace of an oscillograph; they cut a jagged and confusing path. As they rise a distinct 'theme' emerges, momentarily isolated from a maelstrom of interweaving currents. Due to the intensity of Trakl's language, and to the momentum historically invested within it, each theme shatters into blinding foam when swept to its apex, and sinks again into swirling depths. In this essay I shall only attempt to explore limited stretches along a single of these interwoven currents: pursuing elements of reflection and dispersion in Heidegger's reading of Trakl's poem *Geistliche Dämmerung*.

Heidegger's readings of poetry are perhaps most distinctively characterized by the refusal to participate affirmatively in the discourse of European aesthetics, and the associated project of rigorously bracketing subject-object epistemological categories. He argues that when the categories of aesthetics are carried into the domain of linguistics or other varieties of language study they take the form of a distinction between a normal and a meta-language. The minimal notion of meta-language is a technical terminology which is distinctive to the critical or interpretative text. This terminology traces an ancestry for itself that is divergent in principle from that of the texts to which it is 'applied'. The kinship of 'thinker' and 'poet' is annihilated. At variance to this sedimenting of metaphysics, Heidegger pursues a tendency towards the uttermost erasure of terminological distinctiveness. The language of poetry is not to be translated, but simply guided into a relationship with itself. And this guidance is not to be that of the thinker *qua* subject, but that of an impersonal thinking which is no longer disguised in the cloak of philosophy. Philosophy would no longer be the guardian of this relation, since the epoch of philosophy is simultaneous with that of meta-language. Or,

put differently, meta-language is pre-eminently the language of metaphysics.

The final essay in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, entitled *Der Weg zur Sprache*, begins by citing a sentence from Novalis's 1798 text *Monolog*: 'Precisely what is most peculiar about language, that it only concerns itself with itself, nobody knows' (*US*, p. 241; N, p. 5). It is from this thought – of language accounting for itself in itself – that Heidegger begins his meditation on poetry. The vocabulary for the meditation is to stem from the reading itself. Indeed, thought is to be carefully dissolved into poetry, but only in such a way that poetry is strengthened in its thinking. Heidegger trusts that the key to what is said in the reserve of Western languages, while itself reserved, is yet able to be elicited. He suggests:

> Thus released into its own freedom, language can concern itself solely with itself. This sounds like the discourse upon an egoistic solipsism. But language does not insist on itself in the sense of a self-centred all-forgetting self-mirroring. As saying, the weft of language is the propriative showing, which precisely deflects its gaze from itself, in order to free what is shown into its appropriate appearing. (*US*, p. 262).

Language is to be understood in a way that could be misread as a theory of narcissism, since it relates itself to itself, and this could be taken to be analogous to the self-regard of a subject enraptured by its own reflection. The discourse on language must therefore fend off a misinterpretation that threatens to appropriate it, or at least deflect it, into a psychoanalysis of the sign. At this crucial moment the circle of language seems to symptomize a type of auto-eroticism, displacing itself into a geometric figure of desire. In insisting that his approach to language is not to be confused with a dissolution of the subject into unconscious energetics – and in the prologue to *Die Sprache im Gedicht* the reference to psychoanalysis is explicit – Heidegger marks a crucial historical crossroads in the interpretation of Nietzsche's doctrine of the cosmic circle, the eternal recurrence of the same. Heidegger seeks rigorously to distinguish his own reading of eternal recurrence – as the last attempt to conceive the temporality of beings, as recapitulation of the history of being, as the circle of language, and even as Trakl's 'icy wave of eternity' – from what has been interpreted within the Freudian research programme as the 'death drive', as the economy of desire, and as the return of the inorganic. Return, which is perhaps the crucial thought of modernity, must now be *read*

elsewhere. The dissolution of humanism is stripped even of the terminology which veils collapse in the mask of theoretical mastery. It must be hazarded to poetry.

Geistliche Dämmerung[1] is the only poem cited by Heidegger in its entirety in the essay, and this is of some considerable significance. Dissolving the unity and specificity of the separate poems plays a vital role in Heidegger's project of uncovering a site (*Ort*) that relates to the Trakl corpus indifferently and as a whole. Up to the point at which *Geistliche Dämmerung* is introduced Heidegger conserves the status of this site as the sole 'ontologically' significant totality by splintering, rearranging, and repeating fragments of the individual poems. The resilient integrity of this particular poem in Heidegger's text might therefore indicate a special difficulty, one that obstructs the process of assimilation and resists the hegemony of the site. If this is so it is possible that an issue is at stake in the reading of this poem which resists absorption into any readily *communicable* truth of Trakl's poetry, an issue that perhaps remains in some sense exterior to a 'thinking dialogue' with the poet, but one that also retains a peculiar insistence. As Heidegger's reading unfolds it comes to chart a closure of communication of precisely this kind.

There is no unambiguous point at which the discussion of *Geistliche Dämmerung* begins. It is approached through a discussion of the final lines of *Sommersneige* ('Summer Solstice') in which the steps of a stranger ring through the silver night, and a blue beast is brought to the memory of its path, the melody of its spiriting year. To this is conjoined the hyacinthine countenance of twilight from the poem *Unterwegs* ('Underway'). Heidegger introduces the poem in order to address what is named in its title, without any hint that the perplexing figure of the sister is to haunt it both here and in its later citation (*US*, pp. 67–81), displacing all other preoccupations. It reads:

Stille begegnet am Saum des Waldes
Ein dunkles Wild;
Am Hügel endet leise der Abendwind,

Verstummt die Klage der Amsel,
Und die sanften Flöten des Herbstes
Schweigen im Rohr.

Auf schwarzer Wolke
Befährst du trunken von Mohn
Den nächtigen Weiher,

Den Sternenhimmel.
Immer tönt der Schwester mondene Stimme
Durch die geistliche Nacht.

(At the forest's rim silence meets / A dark beast; / Quietly, on the hill, dies the evening wind, // The plaint of the blackbird ceases, / And the gentle flutes of autumn / Fall silent in the reed.// On a black cloud you sail, / Drunk on poppies, / The nocturnal pool, // The starry sky. / The lunar voice of the sister sounds unceasing / Through the spiriting night.) (*US*, p. 48; T, p. 66)

The translation of 'beast' for *Wild* is of course unsatisfactory. In German the word *Wild* denotes a feral animal, especially one hunted as game, and sometimes it specifies such animals as deer. In addition it connotes wildness and wilderness, since the adjective 'wild' exists in German as well as English. Furthermore, it is probably etymologically related to the similar word *Wald* (forest). This network of associations seems impossible even to approach in translation. Such difficulties are particularly frustrating inasmuch as this translation must bear almost the entire weight of Trakl's exploration of animality, and the further stresses of Heidegger's response to it.

For Heidegger the 'dark beast' is *clearly* the 'blue beast' who negotiates the diffference between animality and the opening of the horizon of being – *der Mensch*. The wildness of the beast is not swallowed by the forest; instead it gives to the forest a margin. But this margin is not a fixed demarcation, and is not illuminated by the light of day. The shadowy animal, trembling with uncertainty in the evening wind, is man:

> The blue beast is an animal whose animality presumably rests, not in animalness, but rather in that thoughtful gaze, after which the poet calls. This animality is yet distant, and scarcely to be registered, so that the animality of the animal noted here oscillates in the indeterminate. It is not yet brought into its weft [*Wesen*]. This animal, the one that thinks, *animal rationale*, humanity, is, according to Nietzsche's words, not yet firmly established [*fest gestellt*]. (*US*, p. 45).

Heidegger takes the weave of the distance separating humanity from the beasts of the wilderness to rest in a type of thinking that is irreducible to adaptive biological calculation. Such thinking is rooted

in the temporalization of the ontological difference, and has been traditionally unified – if only confusedly so – about the thought of transcendence. Transcendental thinking has the peculiar characteristic of relating itself to the thematic of thought itself, a tendency which has been systematized within epistemological philosophy. Within the western tradition this type of cognition has been designated 'reflection'. The human is that animal caught in the play of its reflection. The line of approach that Heidegger follows, in what is to be his first and sole decisive encounter with the poem, begins with its final stanza:

> The starry sky is portrayed [*dargestellt*, staged, placed there, the *stellen* is always decisive for Heidegger] in the poetic image of the nocturnal pool. So our habitual representation [*vor-stellen*] thinks it. But the night sky is in the truth of its weft this pool. Over against this, what we otherwise call the night remains only an image, namely, the faded and vacuous after-image [*Nachbild*, perhaps also 'copy'] of its weft. (*US*, p. 48)

The insistence that the night sky is in truth a pool is not irreducible either to Heidegger's phenomenological stubbornness, or to a defence of the primordiality of metaphor. It is far more intimately connected with the problematic of spatiality in post-Kantian thinking, and beyond this with the Greek thought of the heavens as χαοζ. These concerns are bound up with Heidegger's pursuit of that reflection which yields an image of human transcendence, and therefore marks a firmly established separation of Dasein from the psychology of animals. This pursuit is perhaps the aspect of Heidegger's work which is closest to the concerns of the ontotheological tradition, the point where his thinking is most 'human, all-to-human'. But there is, nevertheless, something both crucial and 'technically' precise at issue in this play of mirrors. The passage continues:

> The pool and the mirror-pool often recur in the poet's poetry. The water, sometimes blue, sometimes black, shows humanity its own countenance, its returning gaze. But in the nocturnal pool of the starry sky appears the twilight blue of the spiriting night. Its gleam is cool. (*US*, p. 48)

The starry sky has an integral relation to reflection, but one which is of daunting complexity. Heidegger first turns to the pool itself, besides which humanity lies, lost in narcissistic reverie. Here humanity gazes upon itself, although we are not told whether, like Narcissus, this gaze is inflamed with desire.

Heidegger finds the compulsive character of Trakl's imagery to be

indicative of a repression, but one which does not seem to be – at least superficially – primarily sexual. He takes the reflectivity of Trackl's mirrors to exceed all representation and ontical objectivity (*Vorhandenheit*). In the darkened pool the gaze does not return in a familiar form; it reveals instead an abyssal twilit blue, which colours both the dawn and dusk of the spiriting night. The image of no thing returns. Reflection is shattered against the impersonal, against the impassive shade of a pure opening or cleft in beings. Humanity is thus reflected as the default of an (ontical) image; as a lack of ground or *Abgrund* which is the transcendental condition of any possible ontology. The heavens are an abyss: χαος. As we follow Heidegger's discussion of *Geistliche Dämmerung* further, this classical comprehension of chaos enters into a problematic negotiation with the contemporary sense of the word as disorder. It is this negotiation which reopens the path to Trakl's most crucial explorations.

As the reading of *Geistliche Dämmerung* proceeds Heidegger's discussion suddenly changes key, without indicating that there is any thematic unity between the mirror and the mysterious figure who is now introduced, the sister:

> The cool light stems from the shining of the lunar woman [*Möndin*] (Selanna). Ringing her luminosity, as ancient Greek verse says, the stars fade and even cool. Everything becomes 'lunar'. The stranger [*der Fremde*, the German masculine] stepping through the night is called 'the lunar one'. The 'lunar voice' of the sister, which always sounds through the spiriting night, is then heard by the brother in his boat when he attempts to follow the stranger in a nocturnal journey across the pool, which is still 'black' and scarcely illuminated by the stranger's goldenness. (*US*, pp. 48–9)

The sister is allied to the moon, and thus to the luminosity of the night. Her power to render a world visible holds sway in the epoch of world-calumniating darkness initiated by the flight of the Hellenic gods, whose end is heralded by the stranger's goldenness, which is the flickering light of a new dawn. It is the sister who guides the path of the wanderer throughout the nihilistic metamorphoses, during which the securities of ontotheology lose their authority and disappear into their twilight, and before the arising of that new thinking which betrays itself only in scarcely perceptible hints. The sister is associated with transition, and with the indeterminacy of an unthreaded time. Even the corrupted seals that stamped the distinctive mark of scholasticism and theological apologetic are broken, and

no new type has taken their place. The haunting voice of the sister is heard as the brother drifts away from the ancient genus of theological metaphysics and towards the genus of the stranger. Yet the sister's voice cannot be identified with the type of the past or with that of the future, it cannot be subsumed within a genre.

The passage is not so easily reduced to even this tentative metaphysico-historical familiarity, however, since Heidegger does not only mention the sister, but also Selanna; the strangers (*der Fremde, der Fremdling* – the gender of *das Fremde* from *US*, p. 41 – has now strangely metamorphosed); and the sister's brother. What is the meaning of this perplexing cast? What relation does Selanna, the lunar woman, have to the sister who speaks in lunar tones? Of Selanna, David Farrell Krell writes: 'Heidegger recollects the way the ancient Greek lyricists speak of the moon and stars; in the context of abscission, of the confluent twofold, and *seléné*, who as Semele is the mother of Dionysos . . .' (IM, p. 171). In the classical myth Semele is tricked by Hera into demanding that her lover (Zeus) reveal himself to her in his full presence, and when he does so she is killed by his radiance. An event that might suggest some relation to the 'stranger's goldenness'. But even following this apparently unambiguous path quickly leads us into a kind of mythological *aporia*, since, as Robert Graves notes in *The White Goddess*:

> The Vine-Dionysus once had no father, either. His nativity appears to have been that of an earlier Dionysus, the Toadstool-god; for the Greeks believed that mushrooms and toadstools were engendered by lightning – not sprung from seed like all other plants. When the tyrants of Athens, Corinth and Sicyon legalized Dionysus worship in their cities, they limited the orgies, it seems, by substituting wine for toadstools; thus the myth of the Toadstool-Dionysus became attached to the Vine-Dionysus, who now figured as a son of Semele the Theban and Zeus, Lord of lightning. Yet Semele was the sister of Agave, who tore off her son Pentheus' head in a Dionysiac frenzy. (*WG*, p. 159)

The attribution of a (patrilinear) genealogy to Dionysus is complicit with a project of repression. An intoxication that came from nowhere, from a bolt of lightning, is asked to show its birth-certificate. Wine, which Plato will later accommodate even to dialectic, displaces the fungus of the Dionysian cults (*Amanita Muscaria*). The sacred mushroom of the cults is held to be responsible for those socially unassimilable deliria which are a threat to the πολις.

But what is the relation between this ancient policing of social pathology and Heidegger's interpretation of Trakl? How can a bridge be built between such ontic-empirical history, and the onto-transcendental question concerning the site of poetry? The spanning of such a gulf has been hindered by the medicalization of the history of derangement, and its reduction to the historical and psychiatric study of madness. But this regional investigation is nothing other than the contemporary instance of that discourse of the *πολις* which first instituted a genealogy of Dionysus. Such a construction patently fails to mark the inherently delirious character of western history, and, therefore, of scientificity itself. This is not only a matter of ontotheology being rooted in a specific amnesia. A delirium integral to the western graphic order implies, more radically, that any possible history must arise out of the forgetting (or secondary repression) of a constitutive arche-amnesia (the ellipsis integral to inscription). Klossowski has even been led to suggest that western science is aphasic, because it is initiated in the default of a foundational discourse (*NC*, p. 16). This default is not merely a passively accepted pathology, it is an inscribed, prescribed, or actively administered pharmaco-pathology. The response of the West to the writing of itself has been that of a poisoning. This is why the fact that Selanna substitutes for a delirium without origin – which is equally a delirium of origins – seems to resonate with what Derrida entitles an *aggression pharmakographique*.

In Trakl's *Geistliche Dämmerung* the path of the pharmakon, the intoxicated voyage across the nocturnal pool, seems to evade *Geschlecht* (the general resource of typography). Instead it crosses the starry sky, through which the lunar voice of the sister resounds. A problematic of the moon is introduced, demanding some minimal gesture of interpretation. Perhaps to speak of the 'lunar' in this fashion is simply to speak of the way things appear in the night.[2] In the poem *In der Heimat*, for instance, the sister is seen asleep bathed in moonlight:

> *Der Schwester Schlaf ist schwer. Der Nachtwind wühlt*
> *In ihrem Haar, das mondner Glanz umspült.*
> (The sister's sleep is heavy. The nightwind burrows
> In her hair, bathed in the gleam of the moon.) (T, p. 35)

This apparent reduction or simplification of the problem only displaces our difficulties however. The Traklean night (*Nacht*) is, as we

have seen, the time of derangement (*Umnachtung*), consonant perhaps with the 'mania' that stems, like moon (and 'mind'), from the Indo-European road (**men(e)s-*). That the moon is associated with woman is indicated by the etymological relations between 'moon', 'month', and 'menses', but it is also the companion of lunatics and werewolves; figures with whom the reader of Trakl is certainly familiar.

It is, fittingly, in the culminating lines of *Traum und Umnachtung* that this imagery crosses a climactic threshold:

Steinige Oede fand er am Abend, Geleite eines Toten in das dunkle Haus des Vaters. Purpurne Wolke umwölkte sein Haupt, daß er schweigend über sein eigenes Blut und Bildnis herfiel, ein mondenes Antlitz; steinern ins Leere hinsank, da in zerbrochenen Spiegel, ein sterbender Jüngling, die Schwester erschien; die Nacht das verfluchte Geschlecht verschlang.
(He found a petrified desolation in the evening, the company of one deceased as he entered the dark house of the father. Purple clouds enwreathed his head, so that he fell upon his own blood and image, a lunar countenance; and fainted petrified into emptiness when, in a shattered mirror a dead youngster appeared, the sister: night enveloped the accursed genus.) (T, p. 84)

With a passage of such beauty and labyrinthine depths any response is likely at worst merely to irritate, and at best to increase our perplexity. I will only try to ask one simple question. Is there a connection to be made between the shattering of the mirror and a movement of astronomical imagery; between an explosion of desire that exceeds all introversion or reflection on the one hand, and a nocturnal or lunar *process* on the other? If such a connection were to be made it would surely pass by way of the sister, who is herself a threshold between the reflective order of the father's house and the illimitative difference of the night sky. It is the 'night pool' with its subtly differentiated luminosities – a series of intensities which defy resolution within any dialectic of presence and absence – that flood onto the mirror with the sister; shattering every power of representation. At the point of a certain nocturnal delirium (or lunacy) the relation of the sister to the family is metamorphosed. She no longer obeys the law of the boundary by mediating the family with itself, sublimating its narcissism, or establishing its insertion into the order of signification by disappearing (leaving the father's house according to the exchange patterns of patrilineal exogamy, and thus as a metabolic or reproductive moment within a kinship structure). Instead she breaches the family, by opening it onto an alterity which has not been appropriated in advance to any deep structure or encompassing

system. A night that was an indeterminable alterity such as this would be a fully positive differentiation from the day.[3]

Perhaps the single most important Trakl text on this theme, in addition to the culmination of *Traum und Umnachtung*, is a poem called *Geburt* ('Birth') (T, p. 64) where lunar imagery functions similarly as a haemorrhaging of familial interiority. The poem pivots upon a line at the end of the third stanza in which a sublimated incestuality works a stifling movement of interiorization: *Seufzend erblickt sein Bild der gefallene Engel* ('Sighing the fallen angel glimpsed his image'). It might seem as if the birth of the sister is to be absorbed in a retreat into the claustrophobic heart of the *Geschlecht*. But although the fourth stanza begins with an awakening in a musty room (*dumpfer Stube*) the one who thus awakes is 'a pale one' (*ein Bleiches*); 'lunar'. The eyes of the mother (or the midwife) (*steinernen Greisin*) are described as 'two moons', a reference taking us back out into the night (whose 'black wing touches the boy's temple'), and back to a crucial image from the second stanza; that of the decayed moon:[4]

Stille der Mutter; unter schwarzen Tannen
Oeffnen sich die schlafenden Hände,
Wenn verfallen der kalte Mond erscheint.
(Silence of the mother; under black pines / The sleeping hands open out / When the cold and ruined moon appears.) (T, p. 64)

It would be possible to interpret this ruin of the moon as a dialectical restoration of the inside, its order and its securities, as if what had defied the inside was now falling away into self-annihilation. It might thus be asserted: 'This nocturnal path, departing from everything we have always believed in, it has all collapsed into chaos now. Wasn't it obvious it was going to go terribly wrong? You should have listened to your priest/parents/teachers/the police.' Yet this is not the only reading open to us.

The ruin of the moon might seem to block the nocturnal movement that passes from a claustrophobic interior into endless space, and that conjugates the dynasty with an unlimited alterity. But this would not be the case if the moon itself was, at least partially, a restrictive element across the path of departure, rather than being the sole gateway into the heavens. The ruin of the moon would then be a protraction of the nocturnal trajectory; a dissolution of the lunar that proceeds not as a negation of the night, but as a falling away of what is still too similar to the sun. This second possibility is sup-

ported by the terms of Heidegger's reading. He is very precise, in his interpretation of the delirious journey across the nocturnal pool, about what he takes the meaning of the moon to be: a constriction of stellar luminescence rather than the ultimate elimination of sunlight; a fading and cooling of stars:

> The cool light stems from the shining of the lunar woman (Selanna). Ringing her radiance, as ancient Greek verse says, the stars fade and even cool. (*US*, pp. 48–9)

This interpretation might seem to lack all philosophical rigour, and perhaps even to forsake any possible 'theoretical' reference. In fact it contributes to a problematic of enormous importance, although one that has been fragmented and largely obliterated by the constitution of astronomy and astro-physics as positive sciences in modern times. This problem is that of real (and astronomically evident) differences that are *in principle* irreducible to mathematical formalism, and which are furthermore – as Deleuze has demonstrated in the closing sections of *Différence et Répétition* (Paris, Press Universitaire de France, 1968) – a potential basis for a quite other and more comprehensive approach to mathematization (or theoretical quantification) without any recourse to ultimate identity or equalities. The obscuration of such differences within the constitution of astro-science has been a deferral rather than a resolution of the problem of radically informal differences, leaving this matter as an explosive threat to the foundations of modern cosmology. Perhaps the last confident, unitary, and explicit treatment of the question is to be found in Hegel's 'Encyclopaedia', in the *Zusatz* to the transition from Finite Mechanics to Absolute Mechanics:

> One can admire the stars because of their tranquillity: but they are not of equal dignity to the concrete individual. The filling of space breaks out [*ausschlägt*] into endless kinds of matter; but that [i.e. the casting of the stars] is only the first outbreak [*Ausschlagen*] that can delight the eye. This outbreak of light [*Licht-Ausschlag*] is no more worthy of wonder than that of a rash in man, or than a swarm of flies. (HE, p. 118)

Philosophy is to turn its gaze away from the stars, learning from Thales perhaps, who fell into a hole whilst absorbed in astronomical contemplation. In a subtle but vigorous neo-Ptolemaism, Hegel subordinates the stellar moment to the concrete and ordered bodies of the solar system, and these bodies are in turn subordinated to the development of terrestrial life. This is due to the dialectical dignity of

particularized actuality in comparison with abstract principle, so that astro-physical laws are sublated into their successively more concrete expositions in geology, biology, anthropology, and cultural history. Yet there is something more primordially and uncontrollably disturbing in the vast and senseless dispersion of the stars, something which is even hideous, like a disease of the skin.

What offends Hegel about the stars is the irrational facticity of their distribution; a scattering which obeys no discernible law. He expresses his disdain for this distribution, and his anxiety before it, in a word that is also both a powerful description and an acknowledgement: *Ausschlag*, which can mean swing or deflection, but in this context means 'outbreak' in the sense of a rash. The verb *ausschlagen* is even more multi-faceted, and can mean (among other possibilities) to knock or beat out, to waive, to burgeon or blossom, or to sweat. But Hegel is not speaking of the blossoming of the stars here, or at least, he does not want to do so. We must be careful not to lose track of the 'object' Hegel is isolating here: it is a differentiation that is at once senseless and sensible, an outbreak of irrationality in the redoubt of reason similar to that which Kant acknowledges in the *Schematismuslehre*. It is the differential principle of stars, flies, flocks of birds, and dust; of astronomical, geological, ornithological,[5] and epidermal eruptions. Trakl names it with deft precision *Staub der Sterne* ('the dust of the stars'). In his reading of Trakl Heidegger also acknowledges this unity of *aus* and *Schlag* as a disruption 'of' sentience, but only if the 'of' is read according to the subversive syntax of Heideggerian thought; as an 'of' that no longer presumes a prior and undisrupted subject. For Heidegger sentience is not exploded or threatened from without by the *Ausschlag*, it is always already under the sway of the outbreak that will be derivatively apprehended as its subversion:

> Trakl sees 'sentience' [*Geist*] in terms of that weave [*Wesen*] that is named in the primordial signification of the word *Geist*; since *gheis* means: incensed, dislocated, being outside oneself [*aufgebracht, entsetzt, außer sich sein*]. (*US*, p. 60)

Hegelian sentience could be described as *entsetzt* by cosmological eruption, but the sense of this outrage changes with Heidegger's radicalized approach, in which *Entsetztheit* cannot be thought as a delimiting response to the anarchic explosion of cosmic debris but only as its inertial protraction. Heidegger thus provides us with a

hermeneutical key according to which every sentient reaction to the *Ausschlag* can be read as a symptom or repetition of the outbreak 'itself'. It is no longer even that sentience is infected by irrationality; it is rather that sentience has dissolved into the very movement of infection, becoming a virulent element of contagious matter.

Since the light of the stars is not a transcendental ground of phenomenality, but rather a differential effect stemming from the isolation or uneven distribution of intensities, Hegel takes its claim to philosophical dignity as an offence. He determines starlight as a pathological luminescence, without order or intelligibility. The fading of stars is, therefore, among other things, a name for a necessary stage in Hegel's system. The senseless distribution of stellar material is repressed in the interest of the particularized (sub-)planetary body, which in turn furthers geocentrism and the infinitizing of light. This movement crushes difference under a logicized notion of significance. In contrast, Trakl brings the thought of the sign together with that of stellar dispersion, writing: *O, ihr Zeichen und Sterne* ('O, you signs and stars') (T, p. 63). And – partially echoing Rimbaud's words – *Un chant mystérieux tombe des astres d'or* (' – a mysterious song falls from stars of gold') – he mentions *die Silberstimmen der Sterne* ('the silver voice of the stars') (T, p. 53) and *Das letzte Gold verfallener Sterne* ('The last gold of ruined stars') (T, p. 50). The German word *Stern* derives from the Indo-European root **ster-* meaning to extend or spread out. It is from this root that the English word 'strew' – as well as 'star' – descends. The stars are traces of a primordial strewing; an explosive dispersion, which in its formlessness, defies mathematization or the reduction to order. It is the shock wave of this metaphorics which sweeps through Trakl's specifications of the sign, and it is perhaps for this reason that Trakl writes of ruination (*Verfallen*) in this context. Any order which is to be extracted from the strewing of difference will be dependent on this 'spreading out' (Latin *sternere*), it will not be metaphysical – dependent upon a transcendental difference – but '*strat*ophysical'; a movement between planes, or grades, of dispersion. Where metaphysics has always fixed disorder in a dichotomous relation to an absolute principle of coherent form or ultimate lawfulness, a stratophysics would locate regional order within a differentiation in the rate of dissipation. It thus constitutes an abyssal relativism, although not one that is rooted in subjective perspectives, but rather in the open-ended stratifications of impersonal and unconscious physical forces. Astrophysics is marked by its

etymology as stratophysics – a materialist study of planes of distributed intensities – and therefore can be seen to abandon its most extreme potentialities when it subordinates itself to mathematical physics.

The question of strata can insinuate itself into every word of Trakl's text, because it is at the 'core' of any rigorous graphematics. Each stratum is a dimension of dispersion, flattened like a spiral galaxy. This flatness is just as crucial to the study of intensities as the trajectories traced within it, since the stratification or stacking of organizational levels is the basic form of any possible energetic surplus, the irreducible or final principle of 'real form': redundancy. Each stratum has its specific 'neg-entropy' or positive range of compositions, 'selecting' only a relatively narrow series of combinations from the stock of elements generated by its substrate. A stratum thus inherits an aggregate 'degree of difference' or grammar, distinguishing it from a certain potentiality of 'randomness' (unproblematic reducibility into its substrate), and constituting a potential for teleological illusion (unproblematic reduction of its substrate). This stratification of intensive positivities, which is most clearly indexed by the successive unities of letter, word, sentence, etc. that are precipitated out of a common 'graphic plasma' or semiotic substance within alphabetical regimes, is the only rigorous basis for an architectonics of the sign. Only because of such a graphic redundancy – for example, that stored in the difference between letter and word – *between the words an alphabet makes possible and those which are realized* – can energy be unevenly distributed within a stratum, and intensities generated.[6] Trakl acknowledges this excitatory axis, which punctures and intensifies each plane of distribution, in the use of words related to the German verb *sinken* (to sink). Thus he writes:

Von Lüften trunken sinken balde ein die Lider
Und öffnen leise sich zu fremden Sternenzeichen.
(Drunken with breezes the lids soon subside / And open themselves to strange star-signs.) (T, p. 18)

And:

Zeichen und Sterne
Versinken leise im Abendweiher.
(Signs and stars / Sink quietly in the evening-pool.) (T, p. 51)

The explosion of stellar and semiotic materials generates a com-

bination of intra-stratal and trans-stratal processes, the former of which have been historically determined as 'causal' or 'legislated' and the latter as 'intellectual', 'teleological', or 'legislative'. This is a ramification (speculative I admit) of Trakl's vocabulary of *Stufen* ('steps') of terraced differentiation (a theme I hope to explore more thoroughly elsewhere). Stratification is the complex physiological process, the only one, in which the distinction between matter and meaning cannot be sustained.[7]

The tools Heidegger relies upon in his approach to the issues of exile into the night and astronomical dispersion stem from the 'ecstative analyses' of his Marburg meditations. The term he focuses upon as a possible entry point for such a discussion is 'flame'. He first gathers Trakl's stellar thematic into that of flame with the suggestion: 'The night flames as the lightening mirror of the starry sky' (*US*, p. 66). He then proceeds: *Das Flammende ist das Außer-sich, das lichtet und erglänzen läßt, das indessen auch weiterfressen und alles in das Weiße der Asche verzehren kann.* ('That which flames is the outside itself, that which lightens and lets gleam, and that which in doing so can expand voraciously so that everything is consumed to become white ash.' [The expression *Außer-sich* is such a clear index for Heidegger's notion of ecstasis that Hertz employs 'ek-stasis' as its translation in his rendering of this sentence]) (*US*, p. 60). The flame of the stars is explosive – or outside of itself – but this *Ausschlag* can be a gentle illumination *or* an uncontrolled devastation (an *Aufruhr*, 'revolt', 'turmoil' [*US*, p. 60]). It is about this 'or', with which I am attempting to indicate Heidegger's hope that the *Weiterfressung* can be deflected or suspended in contingency, that the ambiguous path of his reading turns.

Ten pages earlier Heidegger poses this sense of an alternative between castings (*Schläge*) most acutely, and in so doing returns us to the question of infection. Examining Trakl's expression *das verfluchte Geschlecht* ('the accursed genus') (T, p. 84) he points to a Greek word that can be translated equally as either *Schlag* or *Fluch*; πληγη ('curse'). πληγη is also translated by the Latin *plangere*, from which we derive the English 'plague', and the German *Plage* (found in the sixth line of Trakl's poem *Föhn* [T, p. 67] and in the fifteenth line of *Allerseelen* ['All Soul's Day'] [T, p. 211]). Heidegger's text (which I cannot confidently hazard to my translation alone) reads:

Womit ist dieses Geschlecht geschlagen, d.h. verflucht? Fluch heißt griechisch

πληγη, unser Wort 'Schlag'. Der Fluch des verwesenden Geschlechtes besteht darin, daß dieses alte Geschlecht in die Zwietracht der Geschlechter auseinandergeschlagen ist. Aus ihr trachtet jedes der Geschlechter in den losgelassenen Aufruhr der je vereinzelten und bloßen Wildheit des Wildes. Nicht die Zwiefache als solches, sondern die Zwietracht ist der Fluch. Sie trägt aus dem Aufruhr der blinden Wildheit das Geschlecht in die Entzweiung und verschlägt es so in die losgelassene Vereinzelung. Also entzweit und zerschlagen vermag das 'verfallene Geschlecht' von sich aus nicht mehr in den rechten Schlag zu finden. (With what is this gen-us cast, i.e. cursed. Cursed names the Greek πληγη, our word 'casting'. The curse of the decomposed gen-us consists in this, that this ancient gen-us is cast apart into the discord of gen-ders. Each of the genera strives for unleashed revolt in an always individuated and naked wildness of the beast. It is not the twofold that is the curse, but rather the discordance of the two. Out of the revolt of the blind wildness it carries the gen-us, cast away into torn duality and unleashed individuation. Thus divided and cast down the 'ruined gen-us' is no longer able to find the 'right cast'.) (*US*, p. 50)

It would be possible to read this passage as if it were a development entirely internal to Heidegger's 'philosophy', and as if the reading of Trakl in which it is embedded were a mere eccentricity or modulation in the vocabulary of an unswerving intellectual pursuit. Such a reading would recall that according to Heidegger, ontotheology is the curse that leads beings to strive towards absolute mastery of the earth, erasing every trace of their dependence upon being. That difference of each being with respect to being is displaced by the differences among beings, and being is converted into a mere disputed territory to be subdivided among conflicting beings. It would also recall that within this history everything thought of as 'real' has been distributed among exclusive concepts, through which beings represent themselves to themselves in their competitive distinctiveness, so that the differences, discriminations, and determinations of beings cease to speak of being. It would conclude that what is metaphysical (in the sense that Heidegger understands as the ontotheological) in dualities of genre is not that they are binary, but that this binarity monopolizes the interpretation of the being's difference from being. What is lost in ontical interpretation is the being of genre itself, the composition of ontical difference from out of the non-ontic. In other words, to think *Geschlecht* abstractly, but in a certain sense beyond ontotheology, it would be necessary only to insist (in a decisive Heideggerian trope) that ontical differentiation is not itself anything ontical.

Yet Heidegger is not simply interpreting a word that circulates

freely within the German language. He is attempting to read this word as he encounters it within the tortuous and vespertine labyrinth of Trakl's poetry. We must return to Heidegger's question, and attempt to ask it along with him: what is this cast, this curse or epidemic? We are assisted in this by Trakl's words, which lend us a faltering answer to place alongside Heidegger's discussion; the cast that has cursed us, surely that is what Trakl names *Aussatz*; leprosy, infection, and (thus) exclusion. The spaces of difference across which the *Zwietracht* stretches and displaces itself (following the semantic instabililty of *Geschlecht*) are never to be found described by Trakl in terms that could be reduced to formal disjunctions or negative articulations. Instead he writes of *Mauern voll Aussatz* ('walls full of leprosy') (T, p. 41) echoing Rimbaud who, during his *Saison en Enfer* finds himself *assis, lépreux, sur les pots cassés et les orties, au pied d'un mur rongé par le soleil* ('sitting, leprous, upon broken pots and nettles, at the foot of a wall gnawed by the sun') (R, pp. 302–3). It seems at first surprising that Heidegger makes no mention of the frequent references to leprosy throughout Trakl's poetry,[8] since *Aussatz* points to an *Aus-setzung* (the Old High German source *Uzsazeo* means 'one who has been *ausgesetzt* or "cast out" of society'), a coinage which profoundly accords with the ecstative orientation of Heidegger's reading. Heidegger even has a space specifically allocated to disease in his reading. Not that he is particularly concerned with the German equivalent of this word: *Krankheit* (although he quotes Trakl's line *Wie scheint doch alles Werdende so krank!* ('How sick everything that is becoming seems!') (T, p. 29; *US*, p. 64). The disease which finds a place in Heidegger's text is the same as that which obsesses Trakl; it is the searing of stars, or the primordial and contagious eruption of the pathological. But Heidegger's supplement to Trakl's text is disappointingly regressive on this issue, and my brief concluding question touches on an example of the repugnant obstinacy and piety of the 1953 essay in asking: why does Heidegger refuse to follow Trakl and name ecstative eruption *Aussatz*?

In concluding the question of the curse that abuts onto Trakl's thema of *Geschlecht*, Heidegger distinguishes between two cast(e)s and two dualities. There is a cursing cast or stamp that is associated with a reckless and destructive individualization and that generates antagonistic or conflictual binarity (*Zwietracht*), and there is a gentle *sanft* binarity (*Zwiefalt*) that escapes the contagion of the curse. As is so typical of Heidegger, *Zwiefalt* simultaneously marks an aspiration

towards the (Schellingian) post-philosopher's stone of a-logical intervallic difference and the theologian's dream of an immaculate or uncontaminated conception. Drawing upon a thought of pain *Schmerz* as a threshold and relation Heidegger seeks to ameliorate the pathological scorching of the stars: 'gentleness is, following the word *das Sanfte*, the peaceful gatherer. It metamorphoses discord, in that it turns what is injuring and searing in wildness to soothed pain' (*US*, p. 45). This attempt to establish pure and dichotomous distinctions that both explicate and escape the history of oppositional thought necessitates a discrimination between (two) *types* of duality. (It is precisely because Derrida will refuse to underwrite such a discrimination that he turns instead to a re-inscription of continuities that are able to encompass and partially assimilate the 'ruptural' aspect of his own work, resigned to a 'structurally necessary inadequacy' in the prosecution of deconstruction. Both Heidegger and Derrida seem to concur, however, in taking the sense of dichotomy to be irredeemably polar and reciprocally ultimate rather that stratal and unilaterally or impulsively protractile.)

The historical predicament that Heidegger and (in a different way) Derrida trace out here, and which finds its symptom in this problematic 'antinomy' of escape and re-capture, hope and despair, with all the unstable compromises and evanescent moments of indecision or indifference it generates, is too complex to delineate in this paper. I will only venture to suggest that by holding *Zwietracht* and *Zwiefalt* apart at this point, and refusing to abandon the hope that formal or ultimate dichotomy might be redeemed by a future thinking, Heidegger is engaged in what we could legitimately describe as a 'gentle critique' of the history of metaphysics, a grotesque recapitulation of Kant's compromise with ontotheological tradition (and tradition always belongs to the church). Heidegger's attempt is to limit the *Aufruhr* which constitutes the intensive undertow of Traklean textuality. His is the sterile hope of an aging philosopher with Platonic instincts, the delusion that the climactic dissipation of Western civilization can be evaded, and that the accumulation of fossilized labour-power can found an eternally reformable social order. He was not completely unaware of the profound struggle between the weary regimentation of the patriarchal bourgeoisie, and a fluctuating pool of insurrectionary energy tracing its genealogy to the ur-catastrophe of organic matter. But he felt nauseous at the thought of losing control, and perhaps he still believed in God. *Zwiefalt* would surely be a

distantiation from this noise and restless ferment, an end to contagion, a final peace? It is according to this deeply rooted 'logic' of purification and transcendence, the most insidious trope of a decomposing theology, that the irruption of ecstative difference refuses the name *Aussatz*, and Heidegger – exhausted and uncomfortably feverish – lays down his copy of Trakl's poems, and closes his eyes.

Abbreviations

Ba Otto Basil, *Trakl*, Reinbek bei Hamburg, Rowohlt, 1965.

GT Herbert Lindenberger, *Georg Trakl*, New York, Twayne Publishers, 1971.

HE G.W.F. Hegel, *System der Philosophie. Zweiter Teil. Die Naturphilosophie*, from Sämtliche Werke, Band 9, Stuttgart, Fr. Frommanns Verlag, 1929.

IM D.F. Krell, *Intimations of Mortality,* University Park, Penn. State University Press, 1986.

N Novalis, *Dichtungen*, Reinbek bei Hamburg, Rowohlt, 1963.

NC Pierre Klossowski, *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux*, Paris, Mercure de France, 1978.

OC Charles Baudelaire, *Oeuvres complètes*, Paris, Gallimard, 1975.

R Arthur Rimbaud, *Collected Poems* (Parallel text), Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1986.

T Georg Trakl, *Das dichterische Werk*, München, Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1972.

US Martin Heidegger, *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, Pfullingen Neske, 1982. Translated by Hertz and Stambaugh as *On the Way to Language*, London, Harper & Row, 1982.

WG Robert Graves, *The White Goddess*, London, Faber & Faber, 1961.

Notes

1 The German *Dämmerung* is as ambiguous as the English 'twilight', and can mean the half-light of dawn as well as that of dusk. As Baudelaire is almost certainly Trakl's first major poetical influence (Ba, pp. 42–9) it is tempting to read the title *Geistliche Dämmerung* as a translation of *L'Aube spirituelle* ('Spiritual dawn'), the forty-seventh poem of *Spleen et Idéale* (*OC*, vol. 1, p. 46). Heidegger, however, is determined to maintain the ambiguity of *Dämmerung* in his interpretation (*US*, pp. 42–3), and the

importance of *Abend* ('evening') in Trakl's poetry lends weight to this 'decision'.

2 Trakl ends the poem *Am Moor* ('At the Moor') with the line *Erscheinung der Nacht: Kröten tauchen aus silbernen Wassern* ('Appearance of the night: toads dive out of silver waters') (T, p. 54) suggesting that there is indeed an issue of nocturnal luminacy in Trakl's poetry; a becoming visible in the night, which is also an appearance of the night itself. The night is not merely a formal condition or scene for certain apparitions, it is also what is 'expressed' in the silver light of the moon and stars. The night itself finds a voice in 'the lunar voice of the sister', that is also a *Silberstimme* ('silver voice'), a word that is used in the poem *Hohenburg* (T, p. 51), and twice in the poem *Sebastian im Traum* (T, p. 53).

3 The sister is also associated with the moon towards the end of the prose poem *Offenbarung und Untergang*, first in the line *hob sich auf mondenen Flügeln über die grünenden Wipfel, kristallene Klippen das weiße Antlitz der Schwester* ('lifted by lunar wings above the greening treetops, crystal cliffs of the sister's white countenance') that ends the penultimate paragraph. The final paragraph begins *Mit silbernen Sohlen stieg ich die dornigen Stufen hinab* ('With silver soles I climbed down the thorny steps') and speaks of *ein mondenes Gebilde, das langsam aus meinem Schatten trat* ('a lunar shape, that slowly stepped from out of my shadow') (T, p. 97). By stepping out of her brother's shadow the sister escapes the determinations of image, reflection, or copy that could be returned to the same; to a self-mediated narcissism playing with representations as its own (or proper) alterity.

4 The ruined moon is also mentioned in *Sebastian im Traum* in the line *Da in jenem März der Mond verfiel.* ('Then, in that march, the moon was ruined.') (Ruin, from the Latin *ruere* 'to fall', cannot be used intransitively to capture the precise usage of *verfallen* in this case.) (T, p. 53). The ruin of the moon is here taken as a datable event, emphasizing its referential entanglement in the processes of genre. Trakl's deployment of astronomical metaphor is not a retreat from history into timeless or archetypal symbolism, it is, on the contrary, a historicizing of the heavens; the opening of a genealogy through conjugation with astronomical forces. For Heidegger's most explicit comments on Trakl and history see *Die Sprache im Gedicht* in particular (*US*, p. 80).

5 The association of bird-flight and the emergence of signs is one of the richest threads of Trakl's poetry. In *In einem verlassenen Zimmer* ('In an Abandoned Room') occurs the line *Schwalben irre Zeichen ziehn* ('Swallows trace demented signs') (T, p. 16); the final stanza of *Traum des Bösen* ('Dream of Evil') begins *Des Vogelflugs wirre Zeichen lesen / Aussätzigen* ('Lepers read the confused signs of bird-flight') (T, p. 19); the second stanza of *An den Knaben Elis* ('To the Youth Elis') ends with the words *dunkle Deutung des Vogelflugs* ('the dark significance of bird-flight') (T, pp. 17, 49) and *Der Herbst des Einsamen* contains the line *Der Vogelflug tönt von alten Sagen* ('The flight of birds resounds with ancient sagas') (T, p. 62).

Wherever there is erratic dispersal and movement in undemarcated space Trakl anticipates the arising of sense, and a question of reading.

6 Claude Shannon's theory of information understands redundancy as the dimension of a message that does not function at the level of communication, but rather functions as a resource for the discrimination of the incommunicative ('noise') from communication in general, thus providing a layer of insulation against the degradation of the message. This formulation seems to me to lack two crucial elements: 1) It fails to provide any suggestion as to how the message participates in the constitution of redundancies (thus taking redundancy as a transcendental condition of communication). This first default leads to the preservation of the metaphysical distinction between semiotic and material processes (messages and techniques), which is otherwise profoundly shaken by the thought of redundancy; the thought, that is, of an isolation or 'de-naturalization' of the semiotic stratum proceeding by means of intensities or surpluses that invoke no element of negativity, but only gradations. 2) It fails to acknowledge the political dimension of redundancy as a means of trapping disruptive signals. It is this 'trapping' within an intermediate zone between strata that first enables the categories of madness, perversion, deformity, disobedience, and indiscipline to be constituted, thus providing the basis for the associated but counterposed disciplinary programmes of pedagogy, psychiatry, punition, etc. To fail to acknowledge such questions is to take the notion of noise as a purely passive and non-sentient interruption rather than as a strategically oriented 'jamming' of the message, and thus to ignore the conflictual aspects of both grammars and anti-grammatical subterfuges as they contend within the fluctuating space of redundancy or control. This default is typical of a technocratic scientificity which takes the question of power as having been always already resolved prior to the question of technique.

7 For a discussion of strata which is, I think, based upon different principles, see the beginning of Deleuze and Guattari's *La géologie de la morale (pour qui elle se prend, la terre?)* in *Mille Plateaux*, pp. 53–60.

8 For instance, in *Kleines Konzert* ('Little Concert') *Aussätzigen winkt die Flut Genesung* ('The torrent beckons lepers to convalescence') (T, p. 25); in *Drei Blicke in einen Opal* ('Three Glimpses in an Opal') *Die Knaben träumen wirr in dürren Weidensträhnen / Und ihre Stirnen sind von Aussatz kahl und rauh.* ('Youths dream confusedly among the pasture's dry bales / And their brows are naked and raw with leprosy') (T, p. 39) (see also T, p. 40); towards the end of *Helian* (in a line I have already cited) *Helians Seele sich im rosigen Spiegel beschaut / Und Schnee und Aussatz von seiner Stirne sinken* ('Helians soul gazes on itself in the rosy mirror / And snow and leprosy sink from his brow') (T, p. 43); and in *Verwandlund des Bösen* ('Metamorphosis of Evil') there is a *Minute stummer Zerstörung; auflauscht die Stirne des Aussätzigen unter dem kahlen Baum* ('moment of mute devastation; the brow of the leper hearkens under the naked tree') (T, p. 56).

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Derrida, Mallarmé, and Anatole

JOHN LLEWELYN

Parmi le long regard de la Seine entr'ouverte
Paul Valéry, *Valvins*

In memoriam Carl Barbier,
Mallarmé scholar and friend

A parenthetical codicil appended to his article on Mallarmé in a *Tableau de la littérature française* lists various other questions of which Derrida says he 'should no doubt have spoken'.[1] Among them is the question of Anatole.

Anatole, Mallarmé's only son, died in the autumn of 1879 at the age of eight. To have spoken of him would therefore have been to begin to speak of Mallarmé's griefs and of the work of mourning which Derrida says his article also no doubt ought to have treated. Mourning is a topic of which Derrida does treat elsewhere, most explicitly in 'Fors' and in *Glas*, which refers to his own father's recent death. To mourn – *se douloir*, as the obsolete French form put it – is to live with the pain (*douleur*) of a death. Mourning (*deuil*) is therefore a topic of which I no doubt should have spoken when, after listening to a paper in which I had referred to *Glas* and 'Fors',[2] Ruben Berezdivin asked how I supposed that Derrida could regard pain as anything other than something negative. The time lost in giving my lame excuse for not giving a direct answer would have been better spent hearing Derrida speak for himself. When asked after the formal period for discussion what he himself would have said, his reply, if I recall aright, was that pain itself involves a regarding, an evaluation, and is not a sheer datum. Hence it is not negative if by that is meant